

Choudhury calls for dedicated Muslim cemetery

Urgent action needed – leaders call for dedicated Muslim cemetery at Scottish Parliament meeting.

A community meeting hosted by Lothian MSP, Foysol Choudhury, has reignited long-standing calls for a dedicated Muslim cemetery in Lothian, as the community faces an alarming shortage of burial spaces.

For years, Edinburgh's Muslim population has struggled with limited burial provisions, creating distress due to the religious obligation for swift burials. Despite ongoing discussions, existing spaces are rapidly depleting—only 80 plots remain at Ratho Cemetery, with 200 allocated in Midlothian. Future developments, like Craigmillar Castle Park Cemetery, remain uncertain, leaving families in limbo. Despite progress, the number of dedicated burial sites remains insufficient to meet the needs of the growing Muslim population.

At the meeting, policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders stressed the urgent need for a long-term solution, calling for a dedicated, faith-based, and not-for-profit Muslim cemetery, similar to London's Garden of Peace. In response, over the past several years, Choudhury has been actively engaging with Edinburgh Council's Heritage Team, Bereavement Services, and planning departments to identify viable sites, including Mortonhall House and Prestonpans, though no final decisions have been made.

This meeting provided an update on ongoing efforts and offered a platform for community voices to be heard. "The current situation is unsustainable. Our community needs a permanent burial solution that respects Islamic traditions and provides dignity for generations to come," said Mr Choudhury.

Attendees urged swift collaboration between government officials and local authorities to secure land and establish a sustainable cemetery that will serve the community for the next 100 years. Mr Choudhury emphasised this sentiment, summarising, "Community leaders, policymakers, and officials must collaborate to secure land for a permanent Muslim cemetery that can serve future generations."



